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RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

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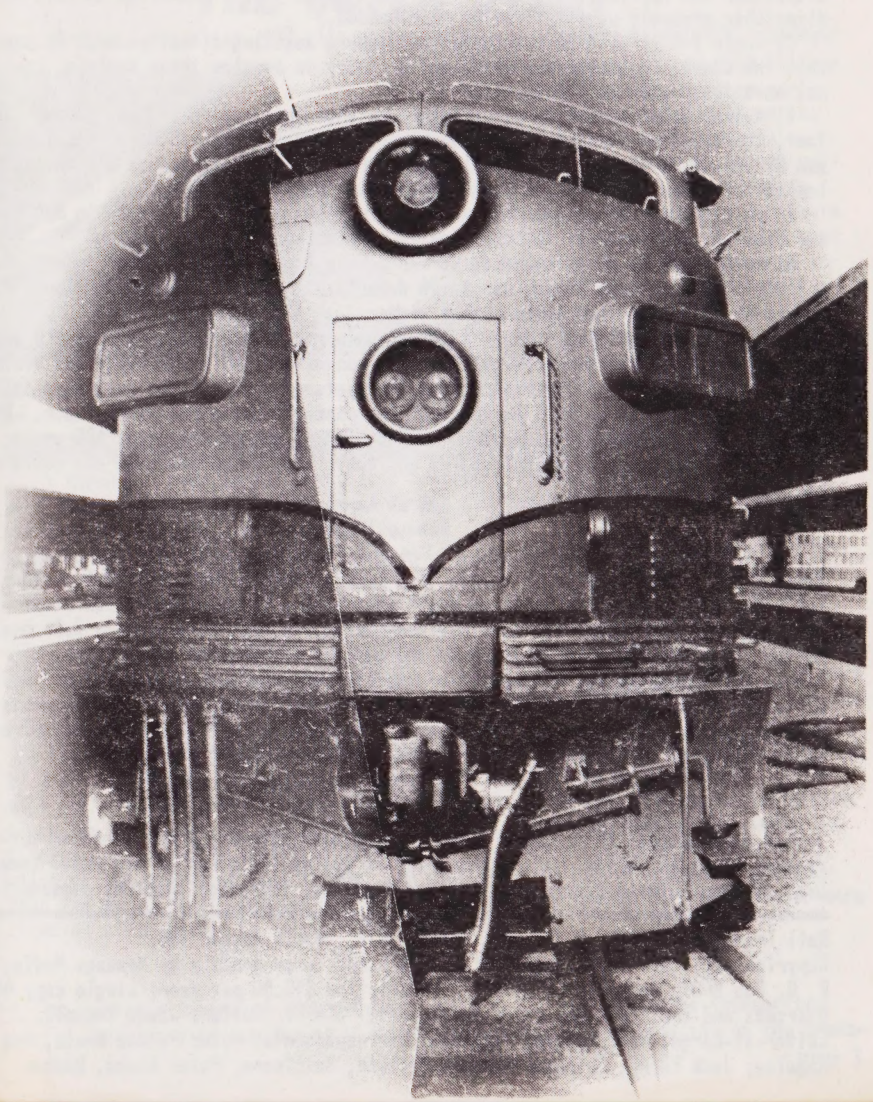
MARCH 1979
ISSUE NO. 186



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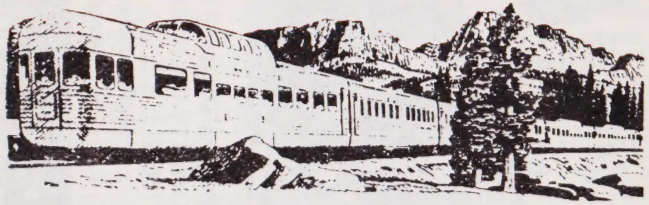

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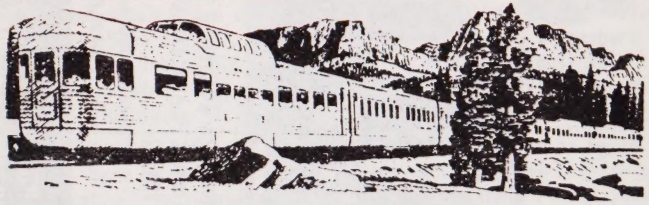

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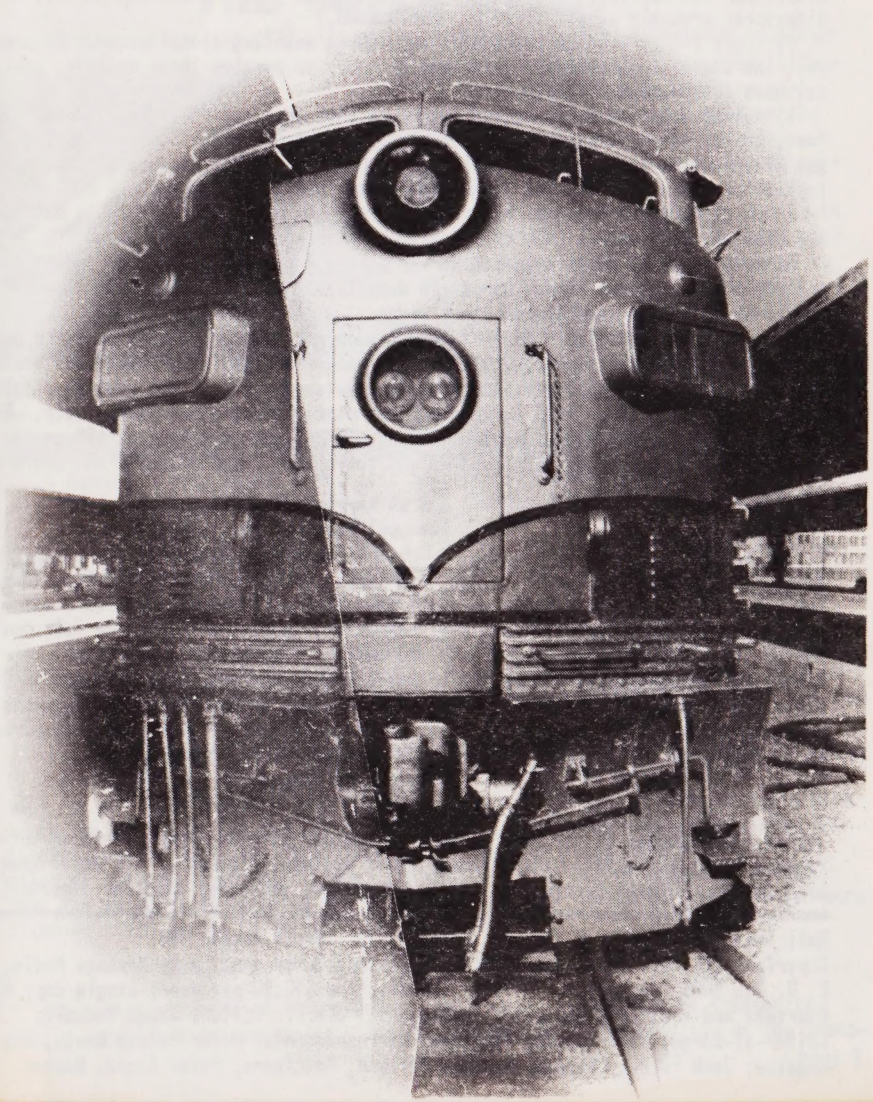

LETTERS

Glenn Lee described (RTN #183) how the EMPIRE BUILDER was delayed by a freight train. He quotes the trainman: "Do you think someone will get chewed out for this?" The reply: "Nah, nobody cares about this anymore."

I am an Amtrak employee and I witness daily the truth that the trainman said: nobody cares. Certainly there are people at Amtrak who care about how the trains operate, but they are a minority. I cite the following examples:

1) The older on-board service employees in Chicago consider Amtrak a joke. They have seen good trains such as the EMPIRE BUILDER and SUPER CHIEF reduced to rolling junkyards.

2) Train #6 is held 30 minutes at Granger, Wyoming. The conductor calls the dispatcher who replies, "Oh, sorry. I forgot about you." (Needless to say, the dispatcher probably wasn't fired or reprimanded.)

3) Train #41 is held 50 minutes at Harrisburg awaiting diesel power. It seems that the Conrail enginehouse, which had 32 hours to service those engines, could not have them ready on time.

4) Amtrak promised better car maintenance when they controlled the yards. In fact, the opposite is true. When Amtrak took control of 21st Street in Chicago and 8th Street in Los Angeles from the Santa Fe, running maintenance all but collapsed. Trains 1-2, 3-4, and 15-16 have never looked so bad.

5) On any given morning at 6am you can stroll into Sunnyside Yards in New York and find at least half of the third shift maintenance workers sleeping.

6) In Oakland an SP maintenance worker paints truck frames and car underbodies a shiny black, but the lounge car on #6 departs with no water, no generator shaft to provide lighting, and opaque Lexan windows.

I am saying quite simply that if Amtrak were run like a business in which profit was the objective, at least 50% of Amtrak's management and union employees would be fired for non-productivity and gross incompetence. Amtrak can no longer fall back on such excuses as "old equipment," "no parts," "untrained labor," etc. Even the new Amfleet cars are not properly maintained. General Motors or IBM would have fired this bunch of unemployables and would have found somebody who could do the job.

Amtrak Employee and Union Member
Name withheld

The trouble with the politicians in Ohio is that they never get out of their cars. We have two parallel highways from Euclid OH to Painesville OH less than two miles apart in places while we don't even have a Painesville Amtrak stop. We have highways everywhere but no Cleveland-Louisville rail service (via Columbus, Dayton, Cincinnati); thus to go south one must go via Chicago or New York. For travel to Pittsburgh you either fly or bus it. Why don't we have a Detroit-Toledo-Cleveland-Pittsburgh-Washington train? All we would need would be the segments Detroit-Toledo and Cleveland-Pittsburgh. Consolidating with other existing trains would take care of the rest. Wake up, politicians--support Amtrak!

Pesach Leib Kremen
Cleveland, Ohio

For your "Quotes of the Week" I want to suggest Governor Brown's rather outrageous views of California's transportation system contained in his Jan 8 inaugural address. Brown referred to crowded freeways, increased gasoline consumption and space travel as signs of prosperity and progress. He said, "Over 14 million motor vehicles each month set new records in gallons of gasoline consumed and miles driven over our roads."

"I said that 1979 was a year of testing--testing whether these people that fill the freeways of California have the vision to prepare for the year 2000."

"Will we invest in the information revolution and continue to dominate the conquest of outer space?"

No mention of need for urban mass transit and intercity passenger trains!

Norman J. Freitag, Chairman
Transportation Subcommittee
San Francisco Bay Chapter Sierra Club
Oakland, California

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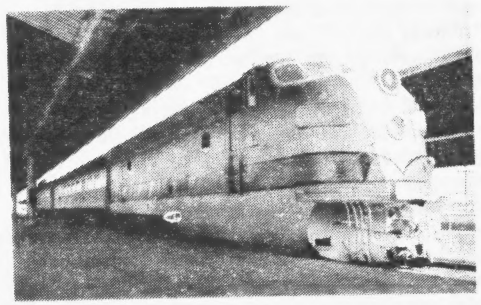
THE COVER STORY

Amtrak FP7 diesel no. 492 sits at Los Angeles's station, along with passenger cars 4460 (a coach) and 9250 "Silver Horizon" (a dome observation car). The consist is painted gold on the right side, with brown trim below. The left side remains in Amtrak colors. A "skirt" has been added to cover the engine's wheels (see photo at left). The consist is being used by Warner Bros. TV for a program to be called "Time Express", tentatively beginning on CBS-TV on April 11. Four one-hour programs are in preparation, featuring Vincent Price and Coral Browne. The train is supposed to travel backwards thru time. Photos were taken in February by Paul Rayton.



On March 3 I rode Amtrak round trip between Milwaukee and Chicago. Both trips were within a minute or two of the schedule and the trains were quite comfortable. The roadbed, however, was less than smooth.

What made this trip unique was the use of the new Superliner equipment on the 4:30pm departure from Chicago. The train consist included engine 230 and Superliner coaches 34016, 34013, 34014, and 34015. The seats were quite comfortable and have plenty of legroom. Also, there are no armrests between the seats, as there are on the Turboliners. I believe it would be more desirable to have an armrest, but one that could be folded out of the way when it is not needed. The cars appeared to perform quite well and did not leak during this trip, in which wet weather prevailed.

This was my first trip on Amtrak since spending three weeks in Europe traveling by train. Both the Turboliner and Superliner coaches are as comfortable as the best TEE and High Speed Trains (HST) that I rode in Europe. The major difference is in the speed and the quality of the tracks. The tracks between Milwaukee and Chicago were in worse condition than any of the 2000 miles in Britain and 4000 miles on the continent that I rode. In addition, the Amtrak trains were slower than the majority of European trains. About the only trains that were slower were climbing steep grades in Switzerland and Italy.

Steve A. Salter
Madison, Wisconsin

The senior citizens of this country, who like to travel, can be transported easily and safely on our trains. There are hundreds of us traveling on the trans-

continental trains, and we enjoy leisurely looking at our great country.

One beautiful, white-haired lady, who was a "witness" at the Amtrak hearings in Salt Lake last July, said she traveled (by herself) all over the world, and always felt safe on a train with a conductor aboard. But she did not enjoy flying (more expensive) and definitely did not feel safe in the bus stations in the U.S. There are enough people in the U.S. to warrant all types of public transportation, and the trains are needed--more of them.

So many of the foreign travelers who talk with me aboard the trains are astounded that we in this great country are trying to "get rid of our trains." So am I!

Helen B. Rose
Provo, Utah

★ ENERGY OUTLOOK WORSENS AS CITIZENS GEAR TO OPPOSE AMTRAK CUTBACKS

While the outlook for continued cheap energy in the U.S. became more bleak day by day, the U.S. Dept. of Transportation was doing nothing to soften its hard line against Amtrak passenger trains, and citizen rail supporters were engaging in letter writing, signature collecting, and demonstrations to urge the federal support of more passenger trains for the nation.

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), meeting in Geneva on Mar 27, voted to increase the base price of petroleum by at least 9% effective Apr 1--a higher increase than expected. And as the days went on and analysts investigated the situation, it was gradually revealed in news releases that the actual costs to U.S. energy consumers would be higher than originally believed.

Some transit systems are starting to suffer from fuel shortages; AC Transit in our area said it had only a 4-day supply on hand. The California State Energy Commission on Mar 28 announced priority guidelines for distributing diesel fuel: hospitals, schools and other essential services get first crack at available fuel; then agricultural users, and third mass transit systems (trucking is fourth, off-road construction equipment fifth, and commercial trucking firms sixth).

On Mar 28 a nuclear power plant at Three Mile Island 10 miles southeast of Harrisburg PA suffered a malfunction that released radiation--the most serious problem yet encountered with a U.S. nuclear power plant. As we go to press the problem is not yet resolved. It raises the probability that the development of nuclear power in the U.S. will be sharply curtailed, while government planners are expecting such power to supply a major portion of American energy needs in the coming decades. The Wall Street Journal reported that "very few Americans" are conserving fuel and that "auto travel is undiminished" despite rising gasoline prices.

Most close observers of the passenger train situation believe that the issue of the energy crunch could save the existing Amtrak system. Rail supporters have been contacting their Congressmen and Senators in increasing numbers in the past week, with only a few weeks remaining for Congress to act or fail to act on the DOT plan to cut back the Amtrak system 43%. A citizen march on the national capitol is planned for Apr 3, initiated by the "Friends of the Railroad" from Harpers Ferry WV. They will travel into Washington Apr 3 on the BLUE RIDGE, and will be joined by entertainer Arlo Guthrie and others for a demonstration to "save the trains". They will then ride the SHENANDOAH to Harpers Ferry. Their aim is to "retain the entire Amtrak system." The National Association of RR Passengers and other groups and individuals have mounted campaigns to alert citizens to the need to protest to their Congressmen about the proposed train cutbacks.

★ BIG AMTRAK PASSENGER REJECTION REVEALED

RTN has learned that Amtrak made a study recently at the request of the National Association of RR Passengers of how many potential passengers were denied space on the New York-Florida trains because of lack of car capacity. Amtrak selected five weeks, apparently at random, during the past year and tallied the number of callers to Amtrak reservation agents (not ticket windows) who were thus turned away. In the highest week, almost 77,000 calls were rejected for lack of space (the first week of 1979). The exact numbers of rejected requests were as follows: week of 7/31/78: 5,081; week of 10/2/78: 2,624; week of 12/25/78: 242; week of 1/9/79: 76,990; week of 2/28/79: 5,073. The DOT has asked that the Florida trains be cut back as part of the systemwide cutback. The actual ridership of the three Florida trains averages about 45,000 to 75,000 per month. Altho the calls doubtlessly include some duplications of requests, the figures suggest that Amtrak may turn away about half of all potential riders on the route.

RAIL CANADA

HEARINGS ARE SCHEDULED by the Canadian Transport Commission on CP Rail's aplication to discontinue or reduce the level of the Edmonton-Calgary train service. Hearings are as follows: Edmonton, Apr 23; Red Deer, Apr 26; Calgary, Apr 27.

VIA RAIL CANADA is now applying to run the CANADIAN service from Montreal Central Station to Dorval via CN, then on CP all the way via Sudbury and Calgary to Vancouver. The ex-CN SUPER CONTINENTAL service would operate Toronto-Capreol-Edmonton-Vancouver entirely on CN tracks. (Currently, the CANADIAN serves Toronto while the SUPER handles Montreal traffic.) This change would eliminate the South Parry, Ont., transfer of the CANADIAN between CN and CP rails, and also a similar move made by the SUPER CONTINENTAL at North Bay.

TORONTO-BUFFALO RDC discontinuance attempts are being renewed.

ONTARIO NORTHLAND RAILWAY will cut out Englehart-Noranda trains 283-584, connections to and from the NORTHLAND as soon as replacement buses are available.

TRANSCONTINENTAL TRAIN CHANGES described above are expected to take place with the mid-June VIA timetable changes. The times west of Winnipeg will be drawn approximately two hours later eastbound, two hours earlier westbound, giving better times at Jasper and in the scenery west of Banff. The major cause of the change was reported to be union problems regarding servicing trains in Toronto and Montreal. The changes would have taken effect Apr 29, but CP unions needed a full 90 days notice because of job losses.

NEW VIA FARES, effective in April, include revised group fare rules and small child rules. The minimum fare is raised from $3 to $4.

AN UNCONFIRMED REPORT says that the U.S. Coast Guard will give cruise ship "Princess Patricia" an exemption for operating in U.S. waters of Alaska without a sewage holding tank for the 1980 season, and also possibly for the 1981 summer, thus helping to ensure continued operation of the CP Rail classic mini-liner in the popular Alaska service from Vancouver, B.C.

"PRINCESS OF VANCOUVER" service between Vancouver and Nanaimo, run by CP Rail, is getting increased passenger and auto rates. Passenger rates go from $4 to $5 and auto rates from $10 to $12.50. CP Rail has made overtures to VIA to take over the service. The ship's dining room is being closed off-season for economy.

THE "PRINCESS MARGUERITE" begins its 1979 season on the Seattle-Victoria ferry steamer run May 3, about 2 weeks earlier than usual, and will operate thru Oct 8.

CANADIAN SPRING BREAK produced heavy loadings on many passenger runs. The normal 9-car SUPER CONTINENTAL was leaving Vancouver with up to 18 cars.

NEW DAYTIME SERVICE with RDC cars between Montreal and Chicoutimi is to begin Jun 1. There will be 12 stops only, with faster running time. The present night train to Chicoutimi will be dropped, but an evening train Montreal-Senneterre will remain. An RDC from Quebec City will meet the Senneterre train at Hervey Jct. and another RDC will connect Senneterre and Cochrane. There will be a twice-weekly train between Quebec and Chambord via Riviere-a-Pierre.

VOYAGEUR BUS STRIKE, begun last Dec 18, remained on in late March, with trains doing a booming business; for example, a 50% increase in traffic between Montreal and Quebec City.

PRESERVING THE RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR

by Glenn Lee

Over 100 persons protested the proposed cutback of Rio Grande's RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR at an ICC hearing on March 1 at Grand Junction, Colorado. The ZEPHYR is America's last privately-operated major passenger train. Railroad attorney John Walker termed the local reaction "amazing". Walker had told reporters that the elimination of passenger service between Grand Junction and Salt Lake City would have little or no effect. Attorneys representing the Public Rail Counsel termed public opposition to the Rio Grande move "phenomenal". Over 200 citizens testified against the cuts at three days of hearings in Salt Lake City and Helper, Utah.

Mayor Ashton Durrett of Glenwood Springs, Colo., told the ICC that the cutback would have a significant effect upon the local economy, and asked for continuation of the service. Other Glenwood Springs speakers said that cutback of the ZEPHYR run to a Denver-Grand Junction only service would be the first step toward total discontinuance of the service. Railroad officials denied that claim.

A petition with over 2,000 signatures was presented to the ICC, which refused to schedule a hearing in Glenwood Springs, which accounts for 70% or more of the ZEPHYR's total passenger business.

Clearly stung by the unexpectedly high opposition turnout at the hearings, rail attorney Walker told the Glenwood Springs Post: "It is incredible that so many people could see their interest threatened by something so remote... Glenwood is very short-sighted."

The "short-sightedness" in Glenwood is due in great part to the efforts of Kirk Whitely, owner of the Hotel Colorado and the Denver Hotel, and an admitted rail buff. Whitely has suggested a multi-prong approach to beefing up ZEPHYR loadings to help keep the train on the tracks. Whitely's suggestions include:

1) Tax relief by on-line communities to help offset passenger deficits.
2) Local matching dollars to Rio Grande's to promote ridership thru advertising.
3) Federal assistance for track improvements in areas where ZEPHYR operation may delay freight trains.
4) Incentives for local businesses such as hotels and restaurants to offer discounts to customers who show they arrived in the community via train--by showing their rail tickets.

Whitely, whose hotels are frequently patronized by train riders, said that he had been cross-examined by the rail attorneys, but that they had not made a single point. Not one of the 100 or more witnesses in Grand Junction was in favor of the cuts. Davis Armstrong, 14, a Grand Junction junior high school student, received the most applause when he told the proceeding: "Zephyr means wind, and 'til the west winds die, the ZEPHYR should blow loudly down the tracks."

Richard Tomar of the Rail Public Counsel received considerable credit for organizing material and presentations. Tomar claimed that the Rio Grande had not advertised its service west of Grand Junction since 1956 and thus had done little or nothing to reduce or eliminate the claimed operating losses. The Glenwood Post said a preliminary cost analysis by the ICC received by the Post showed that the Rio Grande had overstated its losses, and also the benefits to the line should the service be cut west of Grand Junction.

Pitkin County (Aspen) commissioner Bob Child said his county wants to develop a regional transportation system including restoration of direct rail service to Aspen, where tracks were torn out 10 years ago. Child said previous proposals

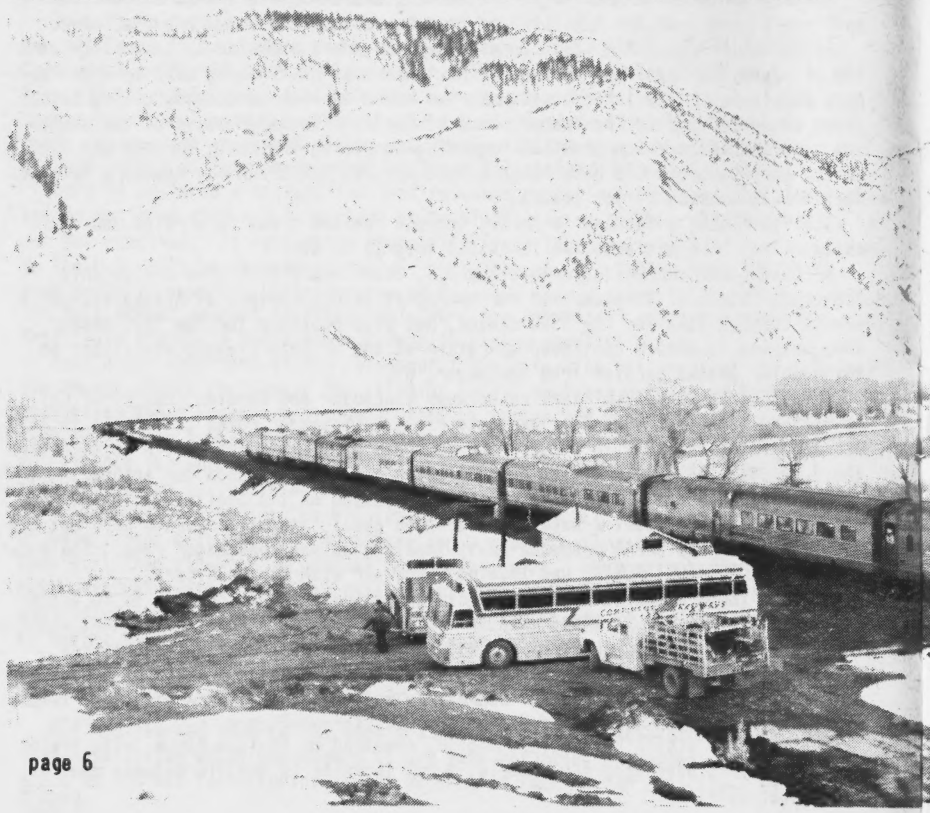


Photo by Paul Rayton.

The westbound RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR was running approximately on time on March 8 when it was halted at about 12:40pm at the first siding past the Dotsero junction by indications of trouble further into the canyon. A sudden--but typical for the season--brief warm spell had caused numerous small avalanches to cover the tracks in 8 or 10 locations thru Glenwood Canyon. The train backed up about a mile to the section hand's office in Dotsero, and Continental Trailways buses were dispatched from Grand Junction, and a snowplow called out from Minturn. The two buses arrived at 3:15 and passengers were divided into "Glenwood Springs" and "Grand Junction and beyond" groups. But the snow blockage proved minor, and buses and train were reunited in Glenwood Springs. The train had to go thru to Salt Lake because of a large group boarding next morning. The train was 5½ hours late by the time it left Grand Junction.

have always died when presented to Rio Grande officials. The popular resort community is heavily dependent on access to Denver for much of its year-round income. Child said that proliferation of the automobile is "seriously eroding the quality of Colorado resorts".

Officials of the Transport Workers Union and others suggested that the railroad be required to join Amtrak.

AMTRAK'S PRESIDENT GIVES HIS VIEWS

EXCERPTS FROM ALAN BOYD'S TALK BEFORE THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF TRANSPORT IN LONDON, ENGLAND ON MARCH 12.

A key phrase in U.S. transportation public policy is "balanced transportation." This is an interesting phrase. It means all things to all people. It was apparently first devised and used by the old Bureau of Public Roads which was responsible for the federal aid to highways program. As seen from the subsidy statistics, especially from the standpoint of the highway segment, the term "balanced transportation" could be likened to a sack of feed. The highways got the grain and the rest of transportation got the sack. Of course, from Amtrak's point of view, there can be no such thing as balanced transportation unless there is a nationwide rail passenger service.

Frankly, I do not believe we will ever have a truly balanced transportation system, for there is no single set of scales by which to draw the balance. Not only are there vast private investments in various elements of transportation, there are in addition the vast public funds from federal, state and local government agencies. And concepts of balance are bound to differ by geographic area and economic activity.

...I have been engaged in a campaign over the past five years seeking to have the Congress require a statement of impact to accompany any proposed transportation legislation. The analogy, of course, is to the environmental impact statement which is widely required now relative to federal programs which may affect the environment in some fashion.

The purpose in seeking to obtain a transportation impact statement is to gain some confidence that Congress will at least be conscious of the implications of a change in either policy or funding at the federal level. It is an effort to get away from the historic programmatic approach where we have succeeded in building major highway, airway and waterway facilities without any apparent consideration of the impact on each other or on the older railway system in this country. So far my suggestion has fallen on deaf ears...

One of the reasons I feel sure the idea of the transportation impact statement has not met with success to date is that it would comprehend the development of full costing techniques. Such techniques are apt to gore a number of oxen who have no desire to donate blood. The full costs of operating our highway systems, our airway systems and probably our railway systems are substantially different than the figures which tend to be offered as the cost of developing and maintaining those systems. A primary reason, of course, is that the figures are cut off at the first generation expense level. The second and third generation expenses, which are essential for the operation of the system, are shown as costs in other than transportation accounts.

...Some supporters of rail passenger service have expressed disappointment, even outrage, that Amtrak has not undertaken a frontal assault on the DOT report in an effort to retain the full 27,000-mile rail system over which Amtrak now operates. My own view is that to do so would be to guarantee, if we were successful, the absolute demise of rail passenger service in our country because we do not have the equipment or the facilities to provide a viable service at the present time over that full system.

For the long-term, and we are concerned about the long-term, the more preferable approach, in my mind, is to reduce the service and the service obligations to the extent to which Amtrak is able to provide modern equipment and facilities to support that service which will enable the traveling public to be provided with a viable choice of transportation modes.

My own preference, and I hope it is that of the Amtrak Board, is to take the position that Amtrak wants to provide the service to the public, speaking thru the Congress and the Executive Branch, want to have provided. In order to do so, there must be a commitment to provide the capital which will enable modern equipment and facilities to be provided on a basis equal to the service obligations which are required of Amtrak.

In addition, if the public wants to retain a nationwide rail passenger service, the Congress and the Administration must agree to providing Amtrak with a certain stability. Ever since the first Amtrak train ran in 1971, the corporation has undergone a major crisis of one sort or another at intervals of no more than two years. This has made intelligent long-range planning a farce. In any normal business operation, the business has a pretty good idea of the level of reliability in the service or product which it is going to provide and therefore a pretty good concept of what its market it. It certainly knows what its resources are. Up to now, Amtrak has not been able to deal with any one of these three fundamentals. The service has been extremely unreliable. This has made it impossible to define the market and because of the appropriations and budget process, Amtrak has had relatively little advance knowledge of what resources were going to be available at any given time. This has got to stop.

The major effort at Amtrak now, in addition to trying to run the trains better, is to get the Congress to focus on the issue of whether or not it is going to support a rail passenger service. If support is affirmed, than an adequate level of funding should be provided on a stable basis permitting the kind of long-term planning and equipment acquisition which is essential if rail passenger transportation is to have any sort of a future.

At this time, I cannot predict how Congress will resolve these basic transportation policy questions. Encouragement does come, however, from our belief that the time is right for change and the present forces of change, particularly energy, seem to favor the rail mode over the long term. I as sure that message will come thru loud and clear over the next few months.

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CALTRANS TALKS TO THE SENATE
Excerpts from the California DOT's Senate testimony on the DOT cutback plan, March 12

It is our opinion that the U.S. DOT has seriously underplayed energy as an issue. Energy appears to have been considered in only one context--where existing rail routes have been compared one to another in terms of passenger miles per train mile. Because of the way the U.S. DOT has framed the energy issue, the Department reaches the odd conclusion that less train service, which means more auto and plane use, is going to help our energy conservation efforts. During the 1974 energy crunch, Amtrak ridership jumped 18%. Whether next time petroleum use is limited by Sunday closing of gas stations, or rationing or steep, steep prices, the demand for Amtrak service is going to increase. We think it will soar--except this time the trains will be gone.

We favor a high level of rail service in the Northeast Corridor; we support improvements to that corridor, and we look positively on the marketing efforts used by Amtrak in the corridor. We think what's good for the Northeast is equally good for the West. We have in the coastal zone of California alone one-half the population of the Northeast Corridor. Trains currently running within California or with a terminal point in California generated 953 million passenger miles in 1977, only 108 million passenger miles less than trains in the Northeast Corridor. And yet we are scheduled, if the U.S. DOT recommendations go thru, to get no track or facility improvements (compared to a recommended $2.5 billion worth of such upgrading in the Northeast), and further, to have two of our routes combined, one cut entirely and nothing added.

We favor an expanded Amtrak system, along the lines of Scenario E in the U.S. DOT's preliminary report. Scenario E is a truly national system and its cost per passenger mile is only about two-thirds that of the U.S. DOT's latest recommended system. We believe that the $693 million in operating subsidy required to support the Scenario E system in 1980 is small compared to the estimated $23 billion a year in taxpayers' funds being spent on highways or the over $2 billion being provided annually to subsidize American airports and airways. We urge the rejection of the U.S. DOT's proposal to cut Amtrak. The $166 million annually in so-called 'savings' which the 11,800-mile cutback will supposedly generate, would build only four miles of 8-lane urban freeway at today's costs. For the 1980's we think we need to have some real alternatives in transportation.

The logic used by the U.S. DOT in thinking thru what we ought to support in the way of passenger rail service in this country appears to be approximately this: First, take the current route system as the base. Don't worry too much about what might be causing problems with various routes in this base or the system as a whole, but just use current passenger miles per train mile as the indicator of whether any particular route should be continued. Second, top off those routes with low passenger miles per train mile (with a minor adjustment here and there to take account of tourism or weather conditions or the like). Third, calculate what would be 'saved' (quote) by this surgery--major surgery as it turns out, because you lose 43% of the route-miles. Finally, as a postscript, suggest that Amtrak use its 'management flexibility' to keep the amputated system alive, by adjusting frequencies of service, fares and all the other things that probably had a great deal to do with how many passengers you had, what your costs were, and why the original route mileage wasn't working as well as it could have in the first place. It seems to us that a good doctor starts out by diagnosing what ails his patient; he doesn't just amputate the patient's limbs on the theory that the patient will as a result suffer less proportionately and spend less for food and clothes.

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT

Photo from Message Media.

BIG, BENDABLE BUSES like this one on AC Transit (seen at the Berkeley CA Marina at the end of the 51-M line) are coming into increasing favor on a number of public transit systems, including Chicago, San Francisco and Seattle, in addition to AC Transit in our area. But one report from Seattle says that the articulated diesel buses have been collecting many accident reports lately; on Mar 9 a runaway moving van struck one there. The San Francisco Muni's models are on a test basis at present--3-door Hungarian-built 60-foot vehicles that cost $180,000 each.

PHILADELPHIA WILL BUY 141 light rail vehicles, and the federal DOT announced on Mar 21 the approval of a grant of $13,840,000 to help buy the new cars and related equipment. The streetcars are scheduled to start operation in 1981 in Southwest Philadelphia, in the central business district's subway-surface system, and on the Media and Sharon Hill lines of SEPTA's Red Arrow Division in suburban Delaware County.

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CALTRANS TALKS TO THE SENATE

Excerpts from the California DOT's Senate testimony on the DOT cutback plan, March 12

It is our opinion that the U.S. DOT has seriously underplayed energy as an issue. Energy appears to have been considered in only one context--where existing rail routes have been compared one to another in terms of passenger miles per train mile. Because of the way the U.S. DOT has framed the energy issue, the Department reaches the odd conclusion that less train service, which means more auto and plane use, is going to help our energy conservation efforts. During the 1974 energy crunch, Amtrak ridership jumped 18%. Whether next time petroleum use is limited by Sunday closing of gas stations, or rationing or steep, steep prices, the demand for Amtrak service is going to increase. We think it will soar--except this time the trains will be gone.

We favor a high level of rail service in the Northeast Corridor; we support improvements to that corridor, and we look positively on the marketing efforts used by Amtrak in the corridor. We think what's good for the Northeast is equally good for the West. We have in the coastal zone of California alone one-half the population of the Northeast Corridor. Trains currently running within California or with a terminal point in California generated 953 million passenger miles in 1977, only 108 million passenger miles less than trains in the Northeast Corridor. And yet we are scheduled, if the U.S. DOT recommendations go thru, to get no track or facility improvements (compared to a recommended $2.5 billion worth of such upgrading in the Northeast), and further, to have two of our routes combined, one cut entirely and nothing added.

We favor an expanded Amtrak system, along the lines of Scenario E in the U.S. DOT's preliminary report. Scenario E is a truly national system and its cost per passenger mile is only about two-thirds that of the U.S. DOT's latest recommended system. We believe that the $693 million in operating subsidy required to support the Scenario E system in 1980 is small compared to the estimated $23 billion a year in taxpayers' funds being spent on highways or the over $2 billion being provided annually to subsidize American airports and airways. We urge the rejection of the U.S. DOT's proposal to cut Amtrak. The $166 million annually in so-called 'savings' which the 11,800-mile cutback will supposedly generate, would build only four miles of 8-lane urban freeway at today's costs. For the 1980's we think we need to have some real alternatives in transportation.

The logic used by the U.S. DOT in thinking thru what we ought to support in the way of passenger rail service in this country appears to be approximately this: First, take the current route system as the base. Don't worry too much about what might be causing problems with various routes in this base or the system as a whole, but just use current passenger miles per train mile as the indicator of whether any particular route should be continued. Second, top off those routes with low passenger miles per train mile (with a minor adjustment here and there to take account of tourism or weather conditions or the like). Third, calculate what would be 'saved' (quote) by this surgery--major surgery as it turns out, because you lose 43% of the route-miles. Finally, as a postscript, suggest that Amtrak use its 'management flexibility' to keep the amputated system alive, by adjusting frequencies of service, fares and all the other things that probably had a great deal to do with how many passengers you had, what your costs were, and why the original route mileage wasn't working as well as it could have in the first place. It seems to us that a good doctor starts out by diagnosing what ails his patient; he doesn't just amputate the patient's limbs on the theory that the patient will as a result suffer less proportionately and spend less for food and clothes.

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT

Photo from Message Media.

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JOIN NARP!

WHAT IS NARP?

A non-profit organization supported by the dues of rail passengers and others who wish to keep and improve rail passenger service.

WHAT IS NARP'S STAND?

Railroad passenger service — commuter, intercity "corridor", and long distance — is an essential element of our national transportation system and must be modernized and expanded.

- **Environment** — Further expansion of highways and airports, especially in urban areas, and of auto and airplane usage, will do unacceptable damage to the environment in terms of land occupation, air pollution, and noise levels. Very little new right of way will be needed for modernization of train service. Trains cause considerably less air pollution and noise per passenger than do autos and jets.

- **Energy** — As we face a continuing global energy shortage, a key advantage of trains is that they consume substantially less energy per passenger carried than either autos or airplanes.

- **Economics** — By contrast to the gargantuan cost of new expressway and airport construction, existing rail tracks and rights of way in many places can be economically upgraded for fast train service.

We work for the passage of constructive legislation in Congress. We maintain direct liaison with government and Amtrak officials. We participate in selected cases affecting passenger service before regulatory authorities and the courts. We conduct a continuing educational program to acquaint the public with the advantages of good rail service and the underlying economic, political and social issues involved.

We solicit your support. We invite you to take part in this important campaign by returning your membership application TODAY.

Amtrak and rail transit must be adequately funded. Moreover, the federal government must undertake a major program for rehabilitation of track and roadbed for the benefit of both passenger and freight service. NARP believes that the ideal solution would be for the government to acquire and maintain all track and roadbed, with private freight carriers, Amtrak, commuter agencies, and others operating over the tracks upon payment of a "user" charge.

Since World War I, federal, state and local governments have poured billions of dollars of the taxpayers' money into highway and airport construction without being fully reimbursed by "user charges." These facilities do not pay local property taxes. The airlines have received, and are continuing to receive, substantial direct subsidies, and enormous benefits from government-financed research and development. The railroads have to pay the full cost of building and maintaining their rights-of-way, stations, signal systems and other facilities. On top of this, they are taxed heavily on these facilities by state and local governments. Private investors have no intention of pouring large sums into railroad facilities in this kind of economic and political climate. Government assistance is the only answer if we are ever to achieve a balanced transportation system.

While motorists on an adjacent "expressway" fight the traffic jams, passengers aboard a Chicago & North Western commuter train speed to their destinations in comfort and safety.

YES, I believe improved rail passenger service is worth fighting for. Enroll me as a member of the National Association of Railroad Passengers immediately at the introductory rate of only $10. Send me my membership card and start my subscription to the monthly newsletter, *NARP News*, to keep me informed about the crucial issues relating to rail passenger service.

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CHANGES IN AMTRAK CAR PLANNING
by Glenn Lee

Major changes in Amtrak car planning which became known last fall mean a much-changed atmosphere in Amtrak's home office, and mean a totally different series of goals for planning of Amtrak services in the next several years. The development of a master "A" list of conventional cars for long-term retention, and a shorter "B" list for cars not to be retained in long-term planning, means that Amtrak's thinking now takes into account a balanced mix of newly-manufactured equipment plus utilization of many of the remaining conventional cars. One year ago such a plan would have been termed "laughable" by many of Amtrak's top executives. Altho the "A" list represents a major victory for those who have counseled economy in car planning, the "B" list as it existed in fall, 1978 shows that many of the policies of former planning exercises remained, albeit in much-reduced circumstances.

Contributing to Amtrak's change of heart were the very good results in the now-modest program for electrifying older Amtrak cars, and replacement of steam heating apparatus. From every source, reports are that the electric-heat program has been totally successful. This is in great contrast to the Amtrak propaganda line even two years ago that electrification of most of the present cars was "not feasible" due to "technical problems" and high cost, and so on.

Two years ago those with an interest were told that conventional cars could not mate with Amfleet equipment. This, of course, now occurs daily throughout the Amtrak system as ex-UP and ex-Santa Fe sleeping cars are operated with Amfleet trains ranging from the MONTREALER in the East to the PIONEER in the West.

Amtrak boosters in Seattle were told that two ex-Burlington dome observation cars now gone from the roster, 9300 and 9301, could not be used on the newly-Amfleeted PUGET SOUND and MOUNT RAINIER corridor runs Seattle-Portland because of incompatibility and also deteriorated wiring which could not be replaced because of cost (one estimate was $50,000 per car for a car that would cost about $750,000 or more at the factory today).

Now that electrification of conventional equipment has proven not only feasible but also inexpensive in comparison to the cost of new cars, and easily "do-able", the program is expected to move ahead until all or most of the "A" list cars are equipped with electric utilities and modified to be compatible with Amfleet or Superliner cars.

Amtrak has been criticized for shaping its future services to fit the needs of a simplistic equipment roster. This is the complete reverse of the way experienced managers go about the task of luring passengers. A more mature group of planners could have been expected to realize that distinctive cars such as domes and observations are necessary to attract passengers. Failure to grasp this elemental principle has meant that many of Amtrak's best cars have already been lost, and all at great public expense when the cost of electrifying the cars is compared to the cost of new cars.

Amtrak now appears to have accepted that domes are here to stay, at least in limited numbers, and that some non-conforming cars may also have a reasonable assignment on Amtrak trains, which then will not necessarily all look entirely alike throughout the U.S.

But Amtrak seems to presume that "B" list cars will continue to be disposed of until the 370 or so cars are eliminated from the property, altho Amtrak has issued a "sop" to its critics by saying that some will be retained in storage for special uses.

With Amtrak's reputation for not being truthful in the subject of older cars in the fleet, this situation would bear close watching. One possible alternative would be for Congress to require that no more cars be disposed of except in the event of serious wreck damage. Cars which Amtrak managers truly do not want on Amtrak property would be turned over to the Army Corps of Engineers for storage at a low-humidity base. One reason for suggesting this is that many of the cars on the Amtrak "B" list of fall, 1977 probably should be candidates for continued long-range use. Many are of stainless steel construction, their only sin apparently having been construction in the late 1930's or 1940. Examples include 1590-1591, 3800-3812, 4460-4462, 4886, 5400-5406, and 5601-5618. In some cases, cars from one factory "run" are placed in both A and B lists. An example on the A list is 2292 (ex-SP 9402), one of four 12-double bedroom cars built by Pullman-Standard for the new CASCADE of August, 1950. Three more sleeping cars from that same order--2380-2382--, all on the present Amtrak roster, are B list cars. Is Amtrak allergic to the drawing rooms in 2380-82? It would seem so.

Pullman-Standard built several coaches, sleepers and lounges for Northern Pacific in 1954. Coaches 5690-5691 and 4890-4893 (originally Holiday lounges) and 3352-3353 are A list cars, despite the fact that they are of carbon steel, because of their good condition. The sole surviving sleeping car from this order, Amtrak 2420, is a B list car. The 2420 contains duplex roomettes. Is Amtrak allergic to duplex roomettes? It would appear so.

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It is to be hoped that Amtrak car enthusiasts with some political skills will work to have more B list cars moved to the A list for complete upgrading, rehabilitation and electrification.

EMPIRE BUILDER DERAILS IN MONTANA

Amtrak train 8, the eastbound EMPIRE BUILDER, derailed at Lohman MT, 14 miles east of Havre, at 5pm MST on Mar 28. The train was traveling at 75mph, Amtrak said, and all 9 cars derailed, with the 4 rear cars turning on their sides and sliding down an embankment. The locomotives remained on the track. One report blamed the accident on a broken wheel on the first car, a baggage car. Ninety-four passengers--most of those aboard--were examined at a hospital and 15 were held for observation. No serious injuries were reported, Amtrak said. Consist of the derailed train was: cars 1248, 1211, 1553, 4892, dome 9466, 4891, 8351, 8049 & 2674.

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AN OPEN LETTER TO CONGRESS FROM THE EDITORS OF RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

Some reasons why you should reject the DOT plan to cut back the Amtrak system by 43%:

1. The American public showed up in good faith in large numbers last summer to testify on behalf of Amtrak train service. The ICC summary of that testimony was very positive in favor of keeping existing trains and expanding the system. But the DOT has totally ignored the rejected the recommendations from the hearings and plannad an even more extensive cutback than the first one.
2. The routes cut in the present plan differ substantially from those in the preliminary plan, but no hearings were scheduled on the altered plan. In fact, the DOT was shifting routes into and out of the proposed system map up until the last minute before releasing it--an indication that the plan was drawn up simply to fit a preset budget figure without sufficient regard for the impact of the plan upon the transportation needs of the nation.
3. The route system shown would be unworkable in many respects and would lead to the ultimate demise of our passenger rail system. Connections could not be reasonably made on some of the routes, in effect erasing them as viable transportation routes. Some routes would have insufficient capacity to serve the population areas they are meant to serve, etc.
4. The present Amtrak system is not the best possible route system that could be devised; but the DOT's proposed system is even worse. Many of the assumptions made in drawing up the system are false or questionable. The DOT did not follow the Congress's directive to draw up an optimal route map; some of the routes are politically inspired: Nevada gets its train service doubled, apparently to appease Senator Cannon, while surrounding Western states have service sharply curtailed or withdrawn completely.
5. Despite its faults, the present Amtrak system has been the product of almost eight years of modification and testing, and should not be thrown out so cavalierly without a well-thought-out alternative that serves the American people well. The DOT's map is not such an alternative.
6. Simply changing routes on a map will not solve the nation's rail passenger problems and needs. Amtrak's problems lie elsewhere, and can be readily articulated by Amtrak officials and many other transportation professionals who have closely studied the situation; it is beyond the scope of this outline to go into them here.
7. Cutting the Amtrak budget will not balance the Federal budget. The plan would instead have the effect of forcing more people onto the less energy-efficient modes--highway and air--and would ultimately cost the nation more in wasted energy and foreign trade deficits.
8. The DOT earlier led Amtrak and rail-supporting consumer groups to believe that funds for new passenger rail equipment would be easy to obtain. Under this mistaken notion, Amtrak unwisely neglected its conventional cars in favor of new passenger cars. The result was decreased passenger-carrying capacity and increased breakdowns of equipment that irritated Amtrak users. Only recently has Amtrak "discovered" that it can upgrade older cars through electrification into very satisfactory vehicles that elicit no complaints. But only a few such conversions have so far been done. Amtrak should increase the pace of this upgrading and order more new cars as well.

9. The double-decker Superliner cars that were planned for several years ago are just beginning to reach Amtrak due to production problems (the car maker has decided to leave the passenger car business when the order is completed). Amtrak's plans were to have these operating last summer, but instead Amtrak had to use the aforementioned non-upgraded conventional cars that continue to create rider complaints--malfunctioning equipment that results in heating, air conditioning and light failures and delayed trains due to breakdowns.
10. Amtrak's budget has not permitted sufficient advertising, so that in a great many places citizens are unaware of the existence of trains. Also, the "negative advertising" surrounding the publicity given the cutback proposals has convinced many that trains have already been discontinued.
11. Ridership of Amtrak trains decreased from expectations last summer due to the problems mentioned above (from shortage of equipment as well as from poor service); yet the DOT used the data from that period to draw up its system plan projections, knowing that it was dealing with atypical patronage figures. Amtrak patronage starting last fall has shown five consecutive months of steady improvement, but these figures are not used in the DOT report.
12. In places where service was satisfactory, with new equipment to alleviate the problems of breakdowns, and with a reasonable amount of advertising, patronage of Amtrak trains has shown strong upsurges. This shows that good service with good equipment would serve the public in a satisfactory manner and fulfill some of its important transportation needs.
13. Amtrak and the DOT have both promoted the false idea that long distance trains are inherent money-losers and that "corridor" trains are more economical. In fact, there is much evidence that exactly the reverse is true; but it is difficult to evaluate this question because Amtrak has used unfair cost allocation practices that automatically place long distance trains at an economic disadvantage on the accounting books--a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy. Using this false notion, the DOT has tried to justify cutting out long-distance routes from the system. Such routes, because of geography, tend to appear in the West.
14. The Administration has been widely criticized for its failure to deal with the energy problem, and its attitude toward the Amtrak system is another example of gross failure to come to grips with the fuel shortage. It is nothing less than sheer folly to consider cutting back the nation's most energy-efficient mode of transportation at a time when each day brings new alarming reports concerning oil supplies, not to mention new problems being encountered with the development and public acceptance of nuclear power--planned to be a major source of future energy in the U.S.

We conclude that the most prudent response would be to leave the Amtrak system unchanged and to provide sufficient capital funds for Amtrak to upgrade its present cars and purchase additional new ones to establish a satisfactory nationwide service that will attract new riders from the less energy-efficient modes. Administration inaction has led the country to a feeling of complacency that is surely false; the decisions made now will be critical ones for the near and distant future. We cannot afford unthinkingly to throw over a major convenient and fuel-economical transportation system in these times without very deliberate and intensive consideration.

Mixed Train of Thoughts

THE HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA area has been heavily in the news the past few days. With the nearby nuclear reactor accident on Mar 28, Amtrak had to get busy with planning for possible evacuation of the area and other concerns. The Amtrak Philadelphia-Harrisburg line runs within 1½ miles of the affected power plant. As Pennsylvania's governor was considering possible evacuation of a 4-county area, Amtrak asked a consultant whether there was any danger from radiation on trains passing the area. Amtrak was told that no protection for passengers was needed, but a Pittsburgh firm arranged to check for possible contamination of trains reaching Pittsburgh. Amtrak planned that if the area around the reactor were cordoned off, it would terminate its trains east of the affected area and west of Harrisburg, turning the BROADWAY LIMITED and NATIONAL LIMITED and busing passenger between trainsets over a safe highway. Amtrak called all available bus companies in the area to alert them, but was told that civil defense authorities would have priority on available buses. Finally, Amtrak contacted a civil defense colonel in Pennsylvania and discussed Amtrak's role in a possible evacuation. Amtrak set up a special telephone number for civil defense officials to call to avoid confusion. Amtrak said it could be of only limited help in an evacuation because of the shortage of equipment, especially to evacuate west of Harrisburg. East of the area, Amtrak said it could use commuter cars from Paoli and Philadelphia in 16-car sets and run shuttles east from the afflicted area. Amtrak said it would like at least 3 or 4 hours' notice to prepare for such an evacuation. The rail corporation said that business on the line on Mar 30 was normal. It said it would put more employees on at headquarters over the Mar 31-Apr 1 weekend to handle any possible emergency. In other Harrisburg news, at Amtrak's Board meeting of Mar 28 it approved a $2.1 million project to upgrade the Philadelphia-Harrisburg line, the first phase of a 6-year program to raise train speeds from 70 to 79mph. Amtrak plans to spend about $57 million thru 1984 to replace tracks and structures along the line. Amtrak owns the line, which is used also by Conrail freights and SEPTA commuter trains east of Paoli. The Board also approved spending $214,000 to repair and improve the Harrisburg station and bring it into compliance with state codes. The work is to start in May and end in Mar 1980.....

* * *

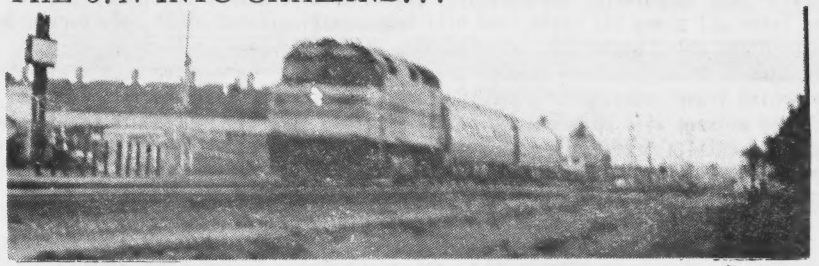
THE PULLMAN COMPANY announced on Mar 20 that it will go out of the rail passenger car building business after having built cars for 110 years. The dropout, predicted here previously, leaves only the Budd Company as a passenger car builder in the U.S. Pullman will complete its present contracts, including the Amtrak Superliner order before ending car production. The company has plants in Chicago and Hammond, Indiana that employ about 2,000 people. Besides the 284-car Superliner order, Pullman-Standard is building 60 rapid transit cars for the Boston system. The company, founded by George Pullman, built its first passenger car in 1869.....

AMTRAK'S RISING PATRONAGE figures are one of the few things that are pleasing the corporation today. December ridership was up 7.5% above Dec 1977, and the Jan and Feb figures for this year, altho not yet complete, will show increases--making five consecutive months of increased ridership. Some recent figures were available: SAN DIEGAN ridership rose in Feb 8.6% to a total of 61,217.....

CHICAGO TO PEORIA proposed Amtrak service could begin this fall, Amtrak and TP&W Railroad sources said late in March. The major roadblocks to initiation of the service to replace the discontinued Rock Island service have been cleared, it was said. However, it is believed that Amtrak President Boyd has placed a moratorium on any Amtrak service changes until Oct 1, the time when the DOT plan is to take effect unless Congress objects..... LAKE SHORE LIMITED derailed west-

THE 5:42 INTO OAKLAND...

THE 5:47 INTO OAKLAND...



On Mar 6, the fifth anniversary of the first revenue runs of Amtrak's SAN JOAQUIN, we waited by the tracks in Berkeley to photograph the incoming train for the record. To our surprise we got two trains for the price of one. At 5:42pm along comes the domeliner SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR headed for an 80-minute late arrival. Five minutes later along comes our little 2-car Amfleet train 711 for its usual on-time arrival at Oakland.

bound at 5:45am on Mar 28 as it was leaving Buffalo. Two locomotives, two baggage cars and one passenger car derailed at about 3-5mph, causing no injuries. The train was delayed 2hrs 9minutes before being reassembled and restarted on its journey to Chicago..... AMTRAK TRAIN 151, the BEACON HILL, was struck and derailed by a 19-car Conrail freight train in Boston at 5:04pm on Mar 11 between South Station and Back Bay Station. There were six minor injuries reported. The freight moved thru a red signal and backed at an angle into the Amtrak train, hitting the engineer's location and derailing two cars.....

CARTER POLITICAL APPOINTEE to the Amtrak Board of Directors has been confirmed by the Senate. S. Lee Kling has been okayed for a 3-year term to replace Board Chairman Dr. Donald Jacobs. The Board will elect a new Chairman. Kling is head of Landmark Bancshares Corporation of St. Louis. In 1978-79 he was assistant special counsel on inflation for the White House, and previously was on the Democratic National Committee and was a member of the Carter-Mondale National Campaign Steering Committee '76. Mr. Kling appears to be the unnamed individual described by NARP's Dan Monaghan in the March Clearance Card. He says that the Carter Administration attempted to circumvent the electoral process by appointing a certain individual with the understanding that the Board elect him Chairman. This individual also showed up with Brock Adams at a nighttime party for the Board before its February meeting (Monaghan called it "an illegal meeting of the Board disguised as a social event"--the Board is supposed to meet publicly except on personnel matters). At this party, Adams tried to persuade the Board to accept the DOT cutback plan. Monaghan said that the then-uncenfirmed Board appointee joined in the effort to get the Amtrak Board to vote a resolution favoring the DOT plan. To their credit, Board members would have nothing of these Administration tactics. (Incidentally, present Board Chairman Jacobs is an ex-college roommate of former DOT Secretary Claude Brinegar).....

SPRING SCHEDULE CHANGES for Amtrak, effective Apr 29 with the start of Daylight Saving Time: the unofficial report is that Amtrak President Boyd shelved any changes in the system until the cutback proposals are resolved, including the expected schedule revisions for the Seattle-Chicago trains. And indeed the official report shows no changes outside the Northeast Corridor with these exceptions: the Santa Fe requested and got 30mins added to the eastbound SOUTHWEST LIMITED schedule and 30mins added to the LONE STAR in each direction. Amtrak held a press conference Mar 30 to announce the N.E. Corridor changes: because of intensified Corridor track work, all Corridor trains will have slower running times. Five to 20mins will be added to Metroliner schedules, 10-33mins will be added to conventional (Amfleet) train schedules, and 15-45mins will be added to Washington-Boston runs. The schedules of long distance trains operating in the Corridor will be adjusted accordingly. The southbound CRESCENT will operate 10 mins later all along its route, and will begin serving Manassas VA, now served by the CARDINAL only, on Apr 29. The CARDINAL will begin serving Alderson WV. Amtrak said it will prepare a weekly "travelers forecast" in May for N.E. travelers concerning travel conditions in the Corridor. The phone number to call for the recorded message will be announced later. Service to South Portsmouth KY will be suspended until a bridge there is repaired. The Empire Service will probably have some speedups initiated by the state. Chicago-St. Louis runs will be shortened by 5 minutes. There will be minor Chicago-Detroit changes, and maybe minor changes in SAN DIEGAN schedules.....

THE AMTRAK BOARD on Mar 28 approved spending $9 million more to amend the corporation's agreement to buy AEM-7 electric locomotives from the EMD division of General Motors. This will give Amtrak until Jul 31 to expand its order for 15 such engines without incurring price increases on new orders..... AMTRAK BEGAN HANDLING Mar 15 of mopeds (motorized bicycles) as Economy Rail Express on its trains. It published a list of 38 cities where the vehicles can be handled.....

THE INDIANA DRAWBRIDGE at Michigan City IN will be completely renovated at a cost of $775,000, the Amtrak Board agreed at its Mar 28 meeting..... NORTH COAST HIAWATHA was 13 hours late westbound into Spokane Mar 28 due to detours in Wisconsin, engine troubles and cold weather. A GE 5700-series "U-boat" diesel headed the train as it arrived there..... THE BURLINGTON NORTHERN has reportedly told Amtrak that it won't run any trains across the northern tier of the country next winter unless they are electrically-heated..... THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC has reportedly approved the use of the 4449 steam engine on an excursion from Los Angeles to San Bernardino early in May to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the L.A. Union Station..... SAN JOAQUIN HEARINGS will be held by the California DOT in early April: Apr 3 in Fresno, Apr 4 in Los Angeles and Fullerton. Public input was wanted about that route because a discontinuance was not proposed at the time of the summer hearings. Said Caltrans: "Your voice is important. We want and need your point of view. California's rail service is too important to be left to Washington to decide"..... LOOK FOR CALTRANS to start advertising the SP commute trains this spring, and offering discount individual ride tickets on them.....

THE MISINFORMED PUBLIC: United Press International issued a wire service item on Mar 13 with the erroneous information that Congress has until Oct 1 to veto the DOT Amtrak cutback plan (actually about May 15 is the deadline).....

NARP HAS ASKED the Association of American Railroads to help defeat the DOT cutback plan for Amtrak..... INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION issued its annual report to Congress on Amtrak on Mar 15. We have not seen the complete report, but apparently it characterized Amtrak merely as a "financial burden on the American taxpayer"..... CONGRESSMAN SILVIO CONTE of Massachusetts on Mar 21 took sharp issue with U.S. policy that pumps money into railroads in other nations thru the foreign aid program while being so stingy with our own, including Amtrak.....

News in this issue is updated thru March 31, 1979.

RAIL FANTRIPS

Apr 28-29: "Mountain Outin' II"-L.A.-Bakersfield RT on frt-only Santa Fe via San Bernardino (Mar 31-Apr 1 trip sold out). Lv L.A. 7:45am; lv Bakersfld 10am 4/29. 1-day RT's possible w. bus connec. Pacific RR Soc, Box 70, E. Irvine CA 92650.

Jun 2: CN 6060 steam RT Toronto-Collingwood, 125th Anniv. Ontario's first railway. Lv Toronto 8am, back by 10:30pm. $18.95, kids $14.95. Upper Canada Rwy Society, Box 42, Station D, Scarboro, Ont. Canada M1R 4Y7. (416) 294-1925.

Apr 29 Phila-Trenton RT- correction from last issue: includes Chestnut Hill and West Chester branches & run over West Phila "High Line" (frt-only); 4 photo stops.

One Rail Fantrips listing is free. Send full info to: Rail Travel News, Fantrips Dept., PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

CARS & CONSISTS

*Derailed cars of southbd SILVER STAR Feb 11 (see RTN #184, p.3): 2766 "Savannah", 5252, 5457, 5435, 5413, 4458, 4467, 5458, 5242, 4583, 4411, 2691.

*Conrail Valparaiso commuter train 1, Chicago Mar 8: engine: Amtrak 263 (F40-PHRO; cars 9614, 9620, 9618, 9617; engine Conrail 8206 (GP38). Train 2, same: engines: Conrail 7508, 7506; cars Amtrak 5407, E-L 1304, PRR 1678 (P-70).

*Following domes are stored at Los Angeles: 9223, 9541 "Silver River", 9801 "Silver Patio".

*BROADWAY LIMITED, train 41, Harrisburg Mar 25: engines 402, 418, 427 (E9's); cars 1235, 1006, 2027 "Loch Ness", 2832 "Keene Valley", 8302, 3338, 5422, 5421, 4412, SR coach 831, 2606 "Pacific Command". (Train very crowded.)

*SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, train 6, Oakland Mar 17: engines: SP freight & 2 Amtrak SDP's, nos. unknown; cars 1194, 1590, 4855, 4828, dome 9486, 3352, 8097, 2604 "Pacific Cape", 2635 "Pacific Spray", (tour cars Sacramento-Reno: 5666, 5668, 5684, 5603, 5230, 6035, 5665, 5601), Autoliner 100 obs. for excursion Oakland-Reno.

*ILLINOIS ZEPHYR, train 348, La Grange Road, IL Mar 17: engine 715 (P30CH); cars 34014, 34017, 34013, 34020 (Superliner coaches).

*NORTH COAST HIAWATHA, train 18, Edmonds WA Mar 9: engines 249, 244 (F40PHR's), 401 (E9A); heater cars 664, 662; cars 2670 "Silver Terrain", 8047, 8104, 4550, 4890, dome 9479, dome 9461, 1233, 1238 (37 minutes late).

*COAST STARLIGHT, train 11, San Jose Feb 27: engines 586, 568, 619 (SDP's); cars 1249, 2401 "Bad Axe River", 4505, 4866, 4525, dome 9454 "Silver Rifle", 4856, 4853, 4869, dome 9374, 8033, 2654 "Silver Falls", deadhead slpr SR 2023 "Warrior River".

*NATIONAL LIMITED, train 31, Kansas City Mar 15: engines 261, 263; cars 1255, 1268, 2989 "Pine Fern", 20202, 21812, 21818, 21838, 21109 (deadhd from Beech Grove: 21829, 2982 "Pine Rapid", 8302, 4413, 5804, dome 9471.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"If someone <u>really</u> wants to see a 'political route', take a look at the DOT Plan. They are all political routes carefully designed to appease the poverful congressmen whose cooperation they thought they would need. Start with Senator Cannon who came out with Nevada in great shape and work down... The 'political routes' do not wind through the countryside of West Virginia and Montana as some would have the public believe. They wind through the corridors of the White House."

--Dr. Dan Monaghan in The Clearance Card, March.

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"Ross and I were not enroute to our Washington connection with the SOUTHERN CRESCENT and musing over the Adams conference in Southern coach 819."

--Rail Travel News, issue no. 185.

(Then where <u>were</u> you going?)

EXPRESS ADS

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TIMETABLES - Public & Employee New list monthly. SSAE for latest list. Compendium of AMTRAK timetables, 50¢. CARL LOUCKS, 199 Wayland, Hamden CT 06518.

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FREE LEAFLETS on Transport 2000 Canada, on freight trains and the environment, and current railway timetable "fliers." Write to: Membership Services, TRANSPORT 2000 CANADA, Box 300, Terminal A, Ottawa, K1N 8V3, Canada.

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THREE 1979 RAILFAN FUN-TRIPS--May 10-25 MEXICO including Copper Canyon, Mexico City, street cars, subway, and private cars MISTLETOE & SOONERLAND--July 19-29 MISSISSIPPI QUEEN river cruise St. Louis to Cincinnati including Transport Museum & AMTRAK Beech Grove shop--Sept 25 to Oct 7 NEW ENGLAND foliage trip including Edaville Railroad, Mt. Washington Cog, Steamtown, & Seashore Trolley Museum. Basic travel by train--join anywhere using AMTRAK connections. For complete brochures and rates, call or write MIDWEST TRAVEL SERVICE, Howard B. Thornton, Director, 2936R Bella Vista, Midwest City, Oklahoma, 73110--405-732-0566.

SAVINGS ON YOUR DOLLAR: In Canada your American dollar is worth $1.13. Change your money here to get full value. Start bothering VIA now for spring and summer reservations for Canadian Rail Travel. You won't regret your decision, and you'll save money. TRANSPORT 2000, Box 300 Terminal A, Ottawa K1N 8V3.

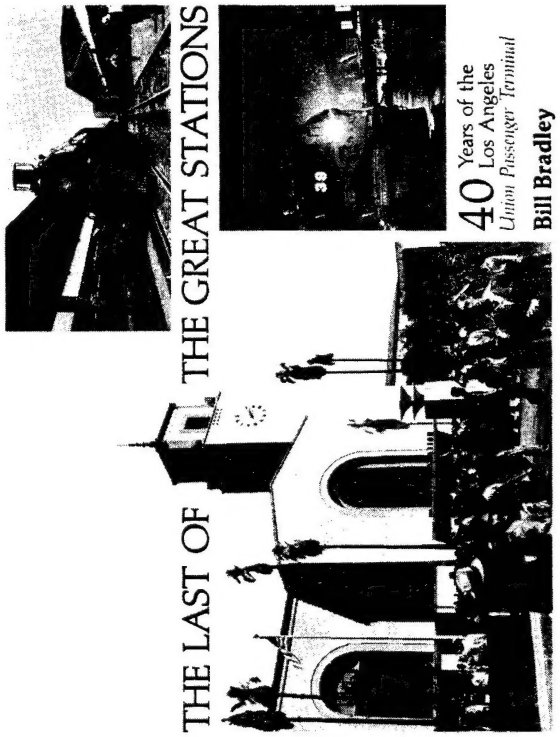
TROLLEY TRAILS Books: Volumes 1 - Yakima, 2-Seattle, 3-Portland, 4-Tacoma/Spokane /Bellingham, 5-Montana/Utah. $3 each, prepaid in U.S. Moneyback guarantee. Wilson Brothers Publications, Box 712-RTN, Yakima WA 98907.

Denver & Salt Lake: Pike's Peak; Salt Lake & Utah uniform button blazer sets, 2 large, 4 small $2.95 postpaid. Joseph Lajoie, 22 Stevens, Methuen MA 01844.

DAVID P. MORGAN SPEAKS MAY 12 in Chicago. The Twentieth Century Railroad Club's Eighth Annual Chicago Railfan Luncheon, part of RailFair: 79, also features Rogers E.M. Whittaker, New Yorker magazine editor and author of All Aboard With E.M. Frimbo; Wallace W. Abbey of the Milwaukee Road; William F. Howes, Jr. of the Chessie System; 1978 World Champion Old-Time Piano Player Mrs. Dorothy M. Herrold; and a Salute to the Super Chief in the form of a film--"High Iron Holiday" (1965) --the Santa Fe Railway's last passenger promotional film. Tickets are $10 ($11 at the door). A cash bar will open in the Union League Club, 65 W. Jackson, at 11:30 a.m. followed by a 1 p.m. Luncheon. Tickets or more information from: Unirail, Railfair: 79R, P.O. Box A-3258, Chicago, IL 60690. Following the Luncheon will be a special, limited capacity, Chicago/Kansas City/Chicago run of "A Night on the Super Chief." A very few tickets might remain at this time. Information from Unirail.

Up-to-date AMTRAK LAW/$8/Robert J. Swan/Box 1866/Long Beach CA 90801.

RTN ADVERTISING RATES: Express Ads $1 per line of 80 spaces. Display ads $1.25 per square inch. RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.



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Bill Bradley

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